

News Release

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Edmonton City Hall displays Baha'i Celebration of Ridvan

Edmonton, April 21, 2008 – The City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action invite Edmontonians to view a new display highlighting the Baha'i celebration of Ridvan. The display officially opens April 21, 2008 and will be in City Hall until May 2, 2008.

Ridvan, the Arabic word for paradise, is a twelve day festival in the Baha'i Faith, commemorating the commencement of Bahá'u'lláh's prophethood. It is considered the holiest and most significant of festivals. It begins at sunset on April 20th and continues until sunset, May 2nd.

Ridvan celebrates Bahá'u'lláh's declaration in Ridvan, the name given to the Najibiyyih garden in Baghdad. This is where the prophet gathered with family and followers for twelve days in 1863, before being banished to Turkey by the authorities and eventually to Akka, in the present day Israel.

While Bahá'u'lláh was in the garden, he said that God had given him the mission of uniting all the world's people, from all religions, races and nations into one human family so that the world could learn to live together in peace.

Ridvan, also known as 'The King of Festivals' in the Baha'i calendar, is celebrated on the first, ninth and twelfth days with devotional services and gatherings, while Baha'is suspend work on those days. On the first day of Ridvan, all Baha'i communities around the world elect their Local Spiritual Assemblies which guide the community for the period of one year.

Edmontonians can view the Baha'i celebration of Ridvan display at Edmonton City Hall weekdays from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays and holidays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The display is part of the *Celebrating Our Faiths* program. The City and the Edmonton Interfaith Centre founded the program to create greater awareness and understanding of the City's diverse faith communities.

About the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action:

The Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action is a co-operative of faiths working together to increase awareness and understanding amongst the people of Edmonton of the various faiths and faith groups in our City. The faiths represented in our organization are: Aboriginal, Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Eckankar, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Scientology, Taoist, Unitarian, and Zoroastrian.

<http://www.edminterfaithcentre.ca/>

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About Edmonton:

This is a city alive with energy and boundless opportunity - a growing economic powerhouse where business thrives and more than a million lives enjoy the freedom to explore, experiment, experience, excel and expect the most out of every day. A place like no other, Edmonton is filled with surprises great and small and a calendar packed with artistic, sporting, theatrical and cultural celebration.

For more information on Edmonton, please visit our website at: www.edmonton.ca.

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